



**6712-01**

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION**

**[OMB 3060-0986]**

**Information Collection Being Reviewed by the Federal Communications Commission**

**AGENCY:** Federal Communications Commission.

**ACTION:** Notice and request for comments.

**SUMMARY:** As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on the following information collections. Comments are requested concerning: whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Commission, including whether the information shall have practical utility; the accuracy of the Commission's burden estimate; ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology; and ways to further reduce the information collection burden on small business concerns with fewer than 25 employees.

The FCC may not conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number. No person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information subject to the PRA that does not display a valid OMB control number.

**DATES:** Written PRA comments should be submitted on or before [INSERT DATE 60 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]. If you anticipate that you will be submitting comments, but find it difficult to do so within the period of time allowed by this notice, you should advise the contact listed below as soon as possible.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all PRA comments to Nicole Ongele, FCC, via email [PRA@fcc.gov](mailto:PRA@fcc.gov) and to Nicole.ongele@fcc.gov.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For additional information about the information collection, contact Nicole Ongele, (202) 418-2991.

**OMB Control Number:** 3060-0986.

**Title:** High-Cost Universal Service Support.

**Form Number:** FCC Form 481, and FCC Form 525.

**Type of Review:** Revision of a currently approved collection.

**Respondents:** Business or other for-profit, not-for-profit institutions and state, local or tribal government.

**Number of Respondents and Responses:** 1,877 respondents; 11,977 responses.

**Estimated Time per Response:** 0.1 - 15 hours.

**Frequency of Response:** On occasion, quarterly and annual reporting requirements, recordkeeping requirement and third-party disclosure requirement.

**Obligation to Respond:** Required to obtain or retain benefits. Statutory authority for this information collection is contained in 47 U.S.C. 151-154, 155, 201-206, 214, 218-220, 251, 252, 254, 256, 303(r), 332, 403, 405, 410, and 1302.

**Total Annual Burden:** 51,080 hours.

**Total Annual Cost:** No Cost.

**Privacy Act Impact Assessment:** No impact(s).

**Nature and Extent of Confidentiality:** The Commission notes that the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) must preserve the confidentiality of all data obtained from

respondents and contributors to the universal service support program mechanism; must not use the data except for purposes of administering the universal service program; must not use the data except for purposes of administering the universal support program; and must not disclose data in company-specific form unless directed to do so by the Commission. Parties may submit confidential information in relation pursuant to a protective order. Also, respondents may request materials or information submitted to the Commission or to the Administrator believed confidential to be withheld from public inspection under 47 CFR § 0.459 of the FCC's rules.

**Needs and Uses:** The Commission is requesting the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for this revised information collection. On November 18, 2011, the Commission adopted an order reforming its high-cost universal service support mechanisms. *Connect America Fund; A National Broadband Plan for Our Future; Establish Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers; High-Cost Universal Service Support; Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime; Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service; Lifeline and Link-Up; Universal Service Reform – Mobility Fund*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109; GN Docket No. 09-51; CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45; WT Docket No. 10-208, Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC Rcd 17663 (2011) (*USF/ICC Transformation Order*), and the Commission and Wireline Competition Bureau have since adopted a number of orders that implement the *USF/ICC Transformation Order*; see also *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Third Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 5622 (2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 27 FCC Rcd 605 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Fifth Order on Reconsideration, 27 FCC Rcd 14549 (2012); *Connect America Fund et al.*,

WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 2051 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7227 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7766 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 7211 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90, Report and Order, 28 FCC Rcd 10488 (Wireline Comp. Bur. 2013); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Report and Order, Order and Order on Reconsideration and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 3087 (2016); *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 16-271; WT Docket No. 10-208, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 31 FCC Rcd 10139 (2016); *Connect America Fund; ETC Annual Reports and Certifications*, WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 14-58, Report and Order, 32 FCC Rcd 5944 (2017). The Commission has received OMB approval for most of the information collections required by these orders. At a later date, the Commission plans to submit additional revisions for OMB review to address other reforms adopted in the orders (e.g., 47 CFR 54.313(a)(6)).

More recently, in the *2018 Rate-of-Return Order*, the Commission adopted a rule requiring rate-of-return ETCs receiving high-cost universal service support to identify on their annual FCC Form 481 their cost consultants and cost consulting firm, or other third-party, if any, used to prepare financial and operations data disclosures used to calculate high-cost support for their submissions to the National Exchange Carrier Association, USAC, or the Commission. *Connect America Fund et al.*, WC Docket No. 10-90 et al., Report and Order, Third Order on

Reconsideration, and Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, FCC 18-29, at 19-20, para. 42 (Mar. 23, 2018) (*2018 Rate-of-Return Order*). *See also* 47 CFR § 54.313(f)(4).

The Commission therefore proposes to revise this information collection, as well as Form 481 and its accompanying instructions, to reflect this new requirement. Any increased burdens for particular reporting requirements are associated with ETCs newly subject to those requirements as a condition of receiving high-cost support.

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.**

**Marlene Dortch,**  
*Secretary,*  
*Office of the Secretary.*

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